



Indiana State Department of Health

Epidemiology Resource Center



Adult Viral Hepatitis Prevention Program Newsletter

May 2013

For questions or suggestions, contact
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What's Going On?

The Hepatitis Provider Inventory Survey was sent out on March 21, and the deadline for responses was April 12th. **Several responses have been collected.** The information gathered from the survey will be provided in an Indiana Comprehensive Viral Hepatitis Resource Guide. Thank you for your responses! Together we can provide a valuable resource to all Indiana residents affected by viral hepatitis.

Spotlight on...

May is Viral Hepatitis Awareness Month

- The Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) will join the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in celebrating Viral Hepatitis Awareness month by highlighting one viral hepatitis infection each week. There will be internal promotion, website and social media prevention messages.
- Check out the new Viral Hepatitis Prevention webpage at <http://www.in.gov/isdh/25797.htm> to take a free Hepatitis Risk Assessment, developed by the CDC.
- The ISDH is now on social media! Check out our twitter account @StateHealthIN and like the Facebook page at Indiana State Department of Health for additional information on Hepatitis and Hepatitis Awareness Month. For questions about social media, please contact the Office of Public Affairs at opa2@isdh.in.gov.
- Remember that **May 19 is National Hepatitis Testing Day.** The CDC would like to know about any testing events planned in Indiana and will promote your testing event on their specific website. To register your testing day event, visit <http://www.cdcnpin.org/htd/SubmitEvent.aspx> Once you have registered your event, it will be displayed on an interactive CDC sponsored webpage, allowing people to look up events in their area. Check out the website at <http://www.cdcnpin.org/HTD/HTD.aspx>
- The CDC has developed and released e-cards on hepatitis that can be sent to friends, family or patients. To access the e-cards, visit <http://t.cdc.gov/ecards/browse.aspx?category=380>

Upcoming Viral Hepatitis Events

➤ **Walk for Hep C to Help...Educate...Promote...Connect**

Always Reflecting Kindness (ARK) is sponsoring a walk for hepatitis C and will be **May 18 at 5800 West Smith Valley Road, Greenwood, Indiana**. Registration opens at 8 a.m. The opening ceremony program will begin promptly at 10 a.m. and the walk will begin immediately afterward. For more information visit the ARK website at www.hepcark.org.

Other Upcoming Events

➤ Public Health Nurse Conference

Join us on Thursday, May 9 and Friday May 10 for the 2013 Public Health Nurse Conference, “Renewing the Spirit: Refresh, Revitalize, Rejuvenate.” Come hear national and local speakers discuss the latest in clinical care and take part in the “Healthier You” sessions that focus on self-care and taking the time to take care of your mental and physical health. To view the agenda Registration is now open. View the agenda and more information at <http://isdhphn2013.eventbrite.com/>

Viral Hepatitis Updates & News

➤ Alcohol Consumption and Hepatitis C

A recent study looked at the impact of moderate alcohol consumption on long-term outcomes of chronic hepatitis C patients using data from the Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES- III). To see what they found, visit <http://bit.ly/YGyOH5>

➤ Hepatitis C

A recent study indicated that individuals with hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection who participated in a class about the disease began therapy more quickly and experienced sustained virologic response (SVR) more often than those who did not participate in the class. Researchers conducted a cross-sectional survey of 94 San Francisco-based primary care providers and performed a retrospective, records review of 118 HCV-infected patients before and after a formal HCV education class. A liver clinic nurse practitioner presented the two hour class, which focused on HCV symptoms, diagnosis and transmission, candidacy for therapy and side effects of treatment. The full report, “Formal Hepatitis C Education Enhances HCV Care Coordination, Expedites HCV Treatment and Improves Antiviral Response,” is published online in the journal *Liver International* (2013; doi: 10.1111/liv.12150).

➤ Prevalence and Predictors of Hepatitis B and C Co-Infection

A study was recently conducted in an effort to address the limited epidemiologic data available in the United States on co-infection of hepatitis B (HBV) and HCV. The aim of the study was to determine the prevalence and predictors of HBV co-infection in a large United States population of HCV patients. The National Veterans Affairs HCV Clinical Case Registry was used to identify patients tested for HCV during 1997-2005; using a variety of categories based on HCV and HBV exposure and infection. The study represents the largest cohort study in the U.S. to date on the prevalence of HBV co-infection in HCV patients. The study revealed that among veterans with HCV, exposure to HBV is common (~35%), but HBV co-infection is relatively low (1.4%). More information and access to the entire study can be found at <http://1.usa.gov/1o8Qg4Y>

➤ Treatment for Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C

Treatment for chronic HBV infection has not advanced as fast as HIV and hepatitis C therapy in recent years, but approval of new drugs has led to higher response rates. On the other hand, treatment for HCV infection has advanced dramatically in the past few years as direct-acting antiviral agents, or DAAs, have improved cure rates and shortened treatment duration. To read about the current and upcoming treatments for HBV and HCV, visit <http://bit.ly/XGRoPK>

➤ New Mother-to-Infant Transmission of Hepatitis B Infection Study

A recent study published online in the Journal of Hepatology determined that babies born to women who have a high hepatitis B viral load – especially if the mothers also test positive for hepatitis B e antigen (HBeAg) – are more likely to contract hepatitis B, even when vaccinated against the disease. Ten children in the study, all of whom were born to HBeAg-positive mothers, developed chronic hepatitis B, in spite of prophylactic measures. To lower risk of hepatitis B infection, researchers recommended that future screening and treatment interventions incorporate the study results. The full report, “Mother-to-Infant Transmission of Hepatitis B Virus Infection: Significance of Maternal Viral Load and Strategies for Intervention,” can be found online in the Journal of Hepatology (February 2013; doi:10.1016/j.jhep.2013.02.015).